

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 2, 2002 LB 600, 1059
 LR 146

upon the income of the people who are interested in buying residential property, which drives the prices from which we derive the sales. One of the things...and I doubt that anyone would remember this, but I have in my hand the printout of the changes. And if LB 600 did nothing else, if LB 600, the introduction thereof, did nothing else, it tells this Legislature and the state of Nebraska that the Tax Equalization and Review Committee...Commission is not doing its job very well. It tells me that the Department of Property Assessment and Taxation is not doing its job very well. It tells me that a system that is based upon sales as determined by individual interpretation of what a sale is, is not resulting in a value that is comparable to what that value might be for agricultural purposes. One of the things I was told, and, quite frankly, did not receive a response to, because I asked the property tax administrator, was that in many counties in the state of Nebraska currently, that the assessors are not valuing irrigated farmland as irrigated farmland. And given the system we use, that's understandable. I've had some conversations with members of the body looking at the anomalies that the LR 146 study indicated, and one of the constants of logic tells you that if you apply the same formula to the same base, you ought to have the same result all over. Well, I have here in my hand from the Revenue Committee staff, and I have no disagreement with their figures, but that in much of Nebraska, in much of Nebraska, irrigated property is tremendously undervalued. That ought not be. If our current system today based upon sales is properly administered, no matter what formula you apply to that, you ought to have about the same difference county to county. When we began the system some ten years ago, trying to bring equalization across the face of Nebraska in all classes of property to answer some of the problems that were incumbent within the application of LB 1059, the original large increase in state aid, it was quickly apparent that we needed to have equalization of values across county lines. Today, today, nearly ten years later, we are much, much less equalized across county lines than what we were those years ago. I am fully aware that this vote has just a few die-hards who believe in the future of the state of Nebraska, and for those of you who are fortunate enough to represent areas that do not include any agriculture property, believe this is foolishness, and you're